

then, and it will be even harder in Iraq, argues Porch, a professor of national security affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

“The truth is that a full decade after World War II’s finale, many U.S. ‘nation-builders’ considered their efforts a *nearly complete failure*—and for good reason,” he writes. In surveys taken at the time, a majority of Germans said that their country’s “‘best time in recent history had been during the first years of the Nazis.’” Instead of gratitude and an enthusiastic embrace of democracy, U.S. reformers in Germany and Japan “encountered torpor, resentment, and resistance,” says Porch.

During the 1950s and 1960s, both the Germans and the Japanese overcame their resentment, and the two nations evolved into flourishing, peace-loving democracies. But that resulted less from Allied occupation policies, Porch says, than from various other factors, including “enlightened political leadership, ‘economic miracles’ spurred by the Marshall Plan in Europe and the Korean War in Japan, and the precedent, however frail, of functioning democratic government in both countries.” The Germans and the Japanese were talented, technologically advanced peoples, eager to put the devastating war behind them. “Above all, though, fear of the Soviets caused leaders in both countries, supported by their populations, to take shelter under the U.S. military umbrella.”

“Post-Saddam Iraq is a poor candidate to replicate the success of Japan and Germany,” Porch maintains. “Though once a relatively tolerant, pluralist society, Iraq has

become a fractured, impoverished country, its people susceptible to hysteria and fanaticism. They are historically difficult to mobilize behind a common national vision, and no Yoshida Shigeru or Konrad Adenauer can be expected to emerge from a ruling class that inclines toward demagoguery and corruption.” Despite the problem Iraq poses for the U.S., there’s no equivalent of the Soviet Union to induce Iraqis to welcome U.S. protection. And “as for prewar experiences of Iraqi democracy, there are none.”

When most U.S. forces came home after World War II, the task of running Germany and Japan was, in effect, “swiftly turned over to the locals” in each country, says Porch, “with the U.S. military retaining vague supervisory powers.” In Iraq, by contrast, “a large U.S. garrison” is likely to be necessary for “the foreseeable future,” inevitably arousing further resentment.

Learning from the mistakes of the de-nazification effort in Germany, the United States should let the Iraqis “carry out their own ‘de-Baathification lite,’ complete with war crimes trials of Saddam’s top henchmen.” Instead of conducting “an invasive campaign of democratization and cultural engineering,” U.S. nation-builders should aim “to ‘normalize’ Iraq fairly quickly by putting a responsible leadership cadre in place while retaining a supervisory role with enough soldiers to back it up,” thus preventing the country from sliding into chaos.

The U.S.-British reconstruction of Iraq will be “neither brief nor cheap,” Porch says, but, “with any luck,” it will succeed eventually, as reconstruction succeeded eventually in Germany and Japan.

UNdone

“Why the Security Council Failed” by Michael J. Glennon, in *Foreign Affairs* (May-June 2003), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

The dramatic rupture of the United Nations Security Council over Iraq earlier this year made evident that the grand dream of the UN’s founders—subjecting the use of force to the rule of law—had failed. But the fault lay not with the United States or France or other member nations, argues Glennon, a professor of international law at Tufts University’s Fletcher School. Rather,

it lay with underlying geopolitical forces “too strong for a legalist institution to withstand.”

Given the recent evolution of the international system, the Security Council’s failure was “largely inexorable,” Glennon says. Well before the debate over confronting Iraq, world power had shifted toward “a configuration that was simply in-

compatible with the way the UN was meant to function. It was the rise of American unipolarity—not the Iraq crisis—that, along with cultural clashes and different attitudes toward the use of force, gradually eroded the council’s credibility.”

In response to the emerging U.S. predominance, coalitions of competitors predictably formed. “Since the end of the Cold War,” Glennon writes, “the French, the Chinese, and the Russians have sought to return the world to a more balanced system.” As Hubert Vedrine, then France’s foreign minister, explained in 2001, “We have to keep defending our vital interests just as before; we can say no, alone, to anything that may be unacceptable.” U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld could not have said it better.

“States pursue security by pursuing power,” observes Glennon, and in doing that, they use the institutional tools available. For France, Russia, and China, the Security Council and their veto power were the tools at hand in the Iraq crisis. Had Washington been in their position, it probably would have done as they did. And, Glennon believes, had the three nations

found themselves in the position of the United States during the Iraq crisis, each of them would have “used the council—or threatened to ignore it—just as the United States did.”

No rational state today would imagine that the UN Charter protects its security, says Glennon. The UN Charter permits the use of force only in self-defense and only “if an armed attack occurs.” But the provision has been flagrantly violated so often since 1945 that it has been rendered inoperative. NATO’s humanitarian intervention in Kosovo in 1999 was as blatant a violation as the recent preventive war in Iraq. “The charter has gone the way of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the 1928 treaty by which every major country that would go on to fight in World War II solemnly committed itself not to resort to war as an instrument of national policy.”

If a new international framework is to be designed in the future, Glennon warns, it must reflect “the way states actually behave and the real forces to which they respond.” If it is built again on “imaginary truths that transcend politics,” such as the notion of the sovereign equality of states, it is doomed to failure.

America’s Blind Spot

“The Paradoxes of American Nationalism” by Minxin Pei, in *Foreign Policy* (May–June 2003), 1779 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Though Americans are among the most patriotic people on earth, they have a hard time acknowledging and dealing with the nationalism of others—a blind spot that can spell trouble for U.S. foreign policy, argues Pei, codirector of the China program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

“American nationalism is hidden in plain sight,” he observes, sustained chiefly by civic volunteerism rather than, as in authoritarian regimes, by the state, and all the more authentic and attractive for it. Even before the 2001 terrorist attacks, a survey showed that 72 percent of Americans were “very proud” of their nationality. That was less than the 80 percent of Mexicans, 81 percent of Egyptians, and

92 percent of Iranians who said they were “very proud” of theirs, but it was far more than the 49 percent of the British, 40 percent of the French, and 20 percent of the Dutch expressing national pride.

Americans do not regard their nationalism as nationalism at all, says Pei, because it is not based on notions of cultural or ethnic superiority. They view it, rather, as being founded on a set of universal political ideals that the rest of the world should gladly embrace. But, as Pei notes, even in Western Europe, “another bastion of liberalism and democracy,” a recent survey found that less than half the respondents “like American ideas about democracy.”

Unlike nationalism in most other countries, he says, American nationalism is